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RECONSTITUTING U.S. BRIGADES AND BATTALIONS:  
THE HUMAN TOUCH

A Monograph  
by  
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Quarter Master



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## ABSTRACT

RECONSTITUTING U.S. BRIGADES AND BATTALIONS: THE HUMAN TOUCH by Maj Kelly P. Bennion, USA, 47 pages.

This monograph discusses the importance of recognizing the requirements within the moral domain during reconstitution efforts. This monograph examines those elements within this domain that a commander can influence. It shows the importance of reconstituting these elements as a means of sustaining combat effective units.

The monograph first defines those elements that influence the moral domain, largely relying on the works of S.L.A. Marshall and Ardant du Picq. These elements are imposed into a paradigm, the "Well of Courage," to show their inter-relationships. Next, reconstitution efforts during three distinct periods of Americans at war -- World War II, Korea and Vietnam -- are examined to gain lessons learned in order to influence future considerations. Finally current Army doctrine is analyzed to determine if mutual agreement exists on reconstitution doctrine within the moral domain and if this doctrine is adequate.

Finally, implications of current doctrine are discussed along with concerns when planning or executing future reconstitution missions within the moral domain. Included are the needs to instill individual confidence, foster collective confidence and trust with comrades, and establish a bonding of trust with unit leaders. The significant time requirements this demands is likewise discussed.

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*In war the moral element is to all others as three is to one.*<sup>1</sup>

Napoleon

## INTRODUCTION/METHODOLOGY

Success in battle results in large measure from the prior actions of commanders and staffs. A critical decision in this process is the proper utilization/conservation of combat power. A finite resource that should be coveted by commanders, combat power, is defined as "the ability to fight".<sup>2</sup> This monograph examines reconstitution in the moral domain as one of the principle means of sustaining and conserving this resource within brigades and battalions.

Reconstitution is defined in FM 100-5 as, "focused action to restore ineffective units to a specified level of combat effectiveness."<sup>3</sup> It includes the functions of personnel and equipment replacements, reviving command and control capabilities within a unit, and also the upgrading of a unit's training status. These functions may be addressed individually or in any combination.

Reconstitution is further broken down into two subsets, reorganization and regeneration. Reorganization is defined as, "action taken to shift resources within an attrited unit to increase its level of combat effectiveness." Regeneration is "the rebuilding of a

unit through large-scale replacements of personnel, equipment and supplies; the reestablishment of command and control; and the conduct of mission-essential training for replacement personnel."<sup>4</sup> Current doctrinal views of these two procedures will be discussed in greater detail later in the monograph.

When a unit undergoes reconstitution it is necessary to address all the domains of battle: physical, cybernetic and moral. The physical domain includes the replenishment of supplies and equipment, bringing personnel end-strength up to required levels, receiving medical care, and so forth. These actions present many challenges to the commander, however for the purpose of this monograph they will not be analyzed. As analytical models are developed during the monograph these actions are assumed to be successfully completed. The cybernetic domain is equally important; however, with the exception of command and control relationships between leaders and subordinates, this domain will likewise be held constant. The moral domain, its components and the means to reconstitute them, are this monograph's focus. This monograph seeks to answer whether current Army doctrine is adequate to meet the demands of reconstitution as it pertains to the moral domain across the continuum of conflict.

The methodology followed in resolving the monograph question is first to establish a theoretical base of

reference and a definition for the moral domain by utilizing the writings of two military writers, S.L.A. Marshall and Colonel Ardant du Picq. A new paradigm, the "Well of Courage", will be introduced along with a graphic model to be used in depicting the effects of reconstitution on the level of combat effectiveness (combat power) existing within a unit. Historical reconstitution efforts by the Army are analyzed to identify strengths and weaknesses from past conflicts. During this examination specific attention is focused on whether the moral domain was properly nourished and replenished. Current Army doctrine is examined to determine if there is mutual agreement as to how reconstitution is to be accomplished and also if doctrine is adequate. Finally, based on past lessons learned and current doctrine, the answer to the monograph question and the implications thereof are determined.

#### S.L.A. MARSHALL/ARDANT DU PICQ

The moral domain/human element of combat was addressed in detail by S.L.A. Marshall, a noted Army historian. Utilizing a post-battle interview technique, he came to the conclusion that "man is supreme" - not his weapon. He felt that the repeated lessons from World War II testified to this fact. A man's heart, or inner-self, determined how well he employed his personal weapon.<sup>5</sup>



Marshall discussed proper training techniques for individual soldiers. He felt that realistic/combat-simulated training was a must. However, he recognized personal doubts and hesitations would remain as inexperienced soldiers entered combat for the first time. These hesitations and doubts would cause soldiers to be overly tentative, lose precious time, and fail to seize required terrain. Worse yet, however, this fainthearted effort would cause the needless deaths of soldiers.<sup>6</sup>

While this phenomenon can be lessened by rigorous training, the uncertainty will remain in varying degrees until the individual experiences combat for himself. Combat experience is the ultimate training ground for soldiers. Confidence will not be completely felt until soldiers have proven themselves capable of surviving on a lethal battlefield.

A key to training and to combat readiness is the comradeship that develops among soldiers experiencing similar hardships. This combat hardening will facilitate soldiers bonding together as they become an integral part of an organization. Marshall felt new soldiers had a greater propensity to run from danger than veterans because they had not had the opportunity to "come together" as a group.<sup>7</sup> Effective training and esprit within a unit is manifested when the individual soldier is willing to sacrifice his own life rather than

subject himself to the social disgrace of letting down his "buddy".

This need to feel responsible to others in an organization explains why time to "come together" is so vital to a unit. Within a strongly bonded combat unit, the one quality most cherished by soldiers, even above staying alive, is to maintain their reputation of being "a man among men." Individuals who have not been given the opportunity to bond into the unit will not exude this behavior, which is so conducive to cohesion and unity.<sup>8</sup> There is a direct correlation, Marshall postulated, between removing this societal bonding and the lack of discipline manifested within a unit that is internally disintegrating.

The problems that existed with the typical replacement method used during World War II are best expressed in Marshall's own words:

The stranger was not introduced to his superiors nor was there time for him to feel the friendly interest of his immediate associates before he was ordered forward with the attack. The result was the man's total failure in battle ...

So it is far more than a question of the soldier's need of physical support from other men. He must have at least some feeling of spiritual unity with them if he is to do an efficient job of moving and fighting.<sup>9</sup>

Critical to managing this human element on the battlefield is an understanding and an appreciation by combat leaders for the fear and stress that pervades on individual soldiers. To have a cohesive unit a leader

must minimize this fear and stress which is part of the natural order of combat. It is minimized by the strength received from fellow soldiers who are known comrades and are not strangers recently plugged in to the line. Marshall recognized that there would always be a measure of fear among soldiers engaged in combat. What is required of combat leaders is to maintain control of this fear and not let it snowball into panic and cowardliness.<sup>10</sup>

The moral resolve and inner-drive among soldiers involved in combat will always fluctuate. This resolve and drive is dependent on many outside factors: level of prior training, past and current weather conditions, past successes and failures, and anticipated future operations, among others. It is paramount for leaders to recognize that this element does vary, and for leaders to be prepared to anticipate the effects of these factors.

Although Marshall recognized that fear had an infectious characteristic, he likewise felt that courage had a similar contagious ability.<sup>11</sup> He truly believed the "well" of personal resolve could be positively effected, enabling the individual soldier to fight on with a determined spirit. Marshall truly felt that the most important resource available to a commander was the individual soldier. Not only should a leader care for

the soldier's physical needs, but he must be attuned to his needs in the moral domain.

Many years prior to S.L.A. Marshall, Colonel Ardant du Picq, a French colonel and military writer, was expounding many of the same philosophies regarding combat and the individual soldier. He admitted that technological advances in industry and scientific channels had produced many changes in the art of waging war. He stressed however, that the one thing that had not changed, and would never change, was the "heart of men." He felt that during the critical point of a battle, it was the human heart that would prove to be the decisive factor.<sup>12</sup>

He was likewise a strong believer in unity and mutual trust within an organization. He believed that in a battle the individual's significance and ability to influence the positive outcome of the fight was minimal. Teamwork was essential if the unit was to successfully complete its mission in the face of enemy danger. To this end, if a unit was required to fight with unknown leaders then feelings of disunity and doubt would surface. These feelings would eventually lead to mistrust and hesitation at the critical point. "Unity and confidence cannot be improvised." They are the vital elements in the development of mutual trust.<sup>13</sup>

Earlier still, Clausewitz provided a theoretical framework for the moral domain when he said, "the moral

elements [the skill of the commander, the experience and courage of the troops and their patriotic spirit] are among the most important in war. They constitute the spirit that permeates war as a whole."<sup>14</sup>

The thoughts of Marshall, du Picq and Clausewitz provide a solid base for this monograph's definition of the moral domain. The moral domain is defined as the individual and collective will of soldiers within an organization. It is the sphere which deals with the psyche of the individual soldier and his actions and reactions. In the vernacular it could be termed, "what makes the soldier tick." It is the heart of man. The paradigm of "The Well of Courage" will further expand the meaning of the moral domain and those factors, both positive and negative, which influence it.

### **The Well of Courage**

The "Well of Courage", depicted in Figure 1, is patterned after a concept proposed by Colonel du Picq. He felt that men were capable of tolerating only a finite level of terror; once that level was exceeded they would be ineffective as soldiers.<sup>15</sup> The "Well of Courage" depicts the importance of the moral domain, shows inter-relationships of the factors affecting this domain, and provides a framework for commanders and doctrine writers to reach a clearer understanding.

## 'WELL OF COURAGE'

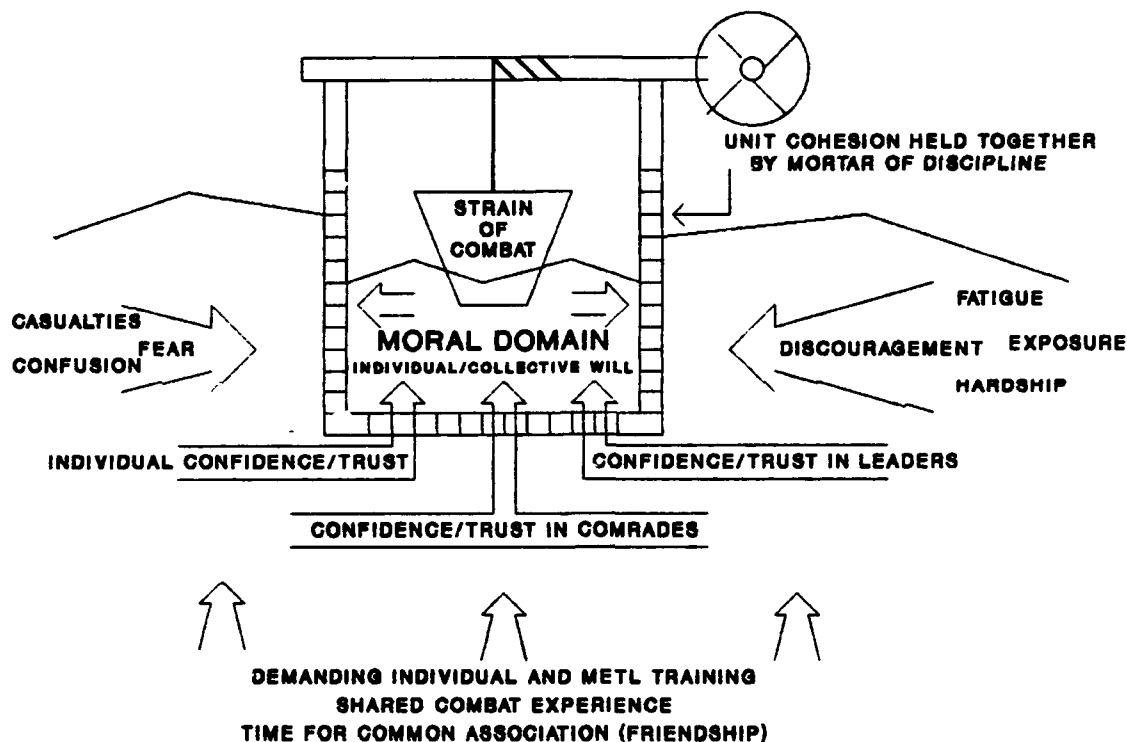


Figure 1

The contents of the well (the water) represent the moral domain in combat. As defined earlier, it is the individual and collective will of soldiers. The contents of the well are held in place by bricks representing unit cohesion. Cohesion has been defined as, "the bonding together of members of an organization in such a way as to sustain their will and commitment to each other, their unit, and the mission."<sup>16</sup> Bricks by themselves will not stay in place when outside pressure is applied; it takes the solidifying effect of mortar to hold them fast. So it is with unit cohesion; more is required than just "getting along" as a unit. Military

discipline (the glue or mortar) gives purpose to the organization and holds it together when stressed and challenged.

The role of discipline -both individual and group- is vital to the moral domain. Discipline has three purposes in a military organization: it ensures individuals do not yield to their natural instinct of self preservation; it maintains order and stability within an organization; and finally, it facilitates the assimilation of new personnel into an organization.<sup>17</sup> Ardant du Picq believed that the purpose of discipline was to compel individuals to continue risking their personal safety and continue to fight on, despite the natural urges to run away from danger. Discipline holds a special position within a military force. In fact du Picq stated, "No army is worthy of the name without discipline."<sup>18</sup>

The strength that comes from the individual and collective will of soldiers has a neutralizing effect on the natural tendency of soldiers to feel fear and discouragement, which have disintegrating effects on unit cohesion and discipline. The greater the volume of will within the "Well of Courage", then the greater the pressure repelling these natural tendencies which are so detrimental to the combat effectiveness of a unit.

The volume of will (water) in the well does not remain constant; the stresses and strains of combat are

constantly depleting its reservoir. Confidence is shaken as units experience combat failures. Loss of comrades and trusted leaders cause discouragement and increased loneliness on "an empty battlefield". Physical fatigue wears down individuals, and the constant "horror of war" fuels the natural tendency of fear and discouragement. All these factors cause the bucket to be dipped into the "Well of Courage", depleting vital sustenance. If the well is allowed to dry up, the pressure from the outside will cause the walls to crumble and disintegrate from its force.

The need exists, therefore, to replenish the "Well of Courage". The well is strengthened and sustained by the following elements of the moral domain: individual confidence and trust, confidence and trust in comrades and confidence and trust in leaders. While these are the sources flowing directly into the "Well of Courage", the real source of strength comes from those factors feeding into these elements of the moral domain. Confidence is strengthened through demanding individual and mission essential task list (METL) collective training. Shared combat experiences will likewise build the level of confidence and trust for comrades and leaders. And importantly, time for common associations - friendship development - is vital to increasing confidence and trust. It has been postulated that cohesive units must have an atmosphere conducive to forming mutual affec-



tions among its members. The more a unit is challenged and shares common hardships and danger, the greater the affection and mutual attraction will grow.<sup>19</sup>

A key factor in the replenishment of the "Well of Courage" is time. This replenishment cannot be improvised or abbreviated if a unit is to sustain the type of internal will necessary to negate the natural tendency of fear. However, the paradigm of the "Well of Courage" does support the observation that units that have begun to disintegrate through the strain of combat can be restored (reconstituted) to a cohesive, effective organization.<sup>20</sup>

Along with the paradigm of the "Well of Courage", the model depicted in Figure 2 will be used to depict the effect the moral domain has on the combat effectiveness of an organization. As stated earlier, the physical and cybernetic domains will be treated as constants when using this analytical model. The physical domain is represented along the "y" axis; greater positive effects are represented by points higher up the axis. The "x" axis represents efforts made in the moral domain; greater positive effects are represented by points further to the right on this axis. (While the cybernetic domain is not drawn, it could be represented by a third dimensional "z" axis.)

The area beneath the "x" "y" intersection represents the combat effectiveness of an organization.

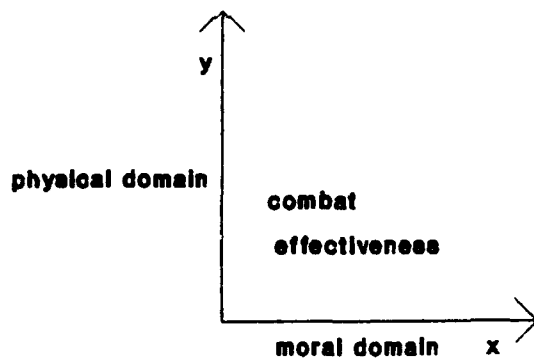


Figure 2

Figure 3 represents the results of inadequate reconstitution in the moral domain and figure 4 represents the results of a more appropriate reconstitution effort. This model will be referred to during the analysis of past reconstitution efforts, as well as the requirements for future considerations.

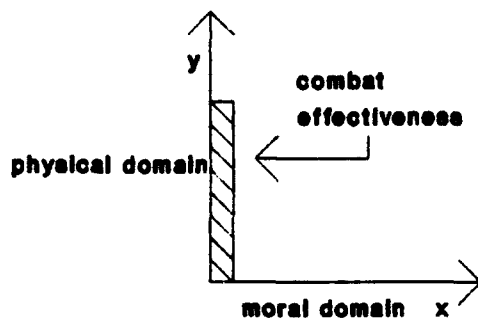


Figure 3

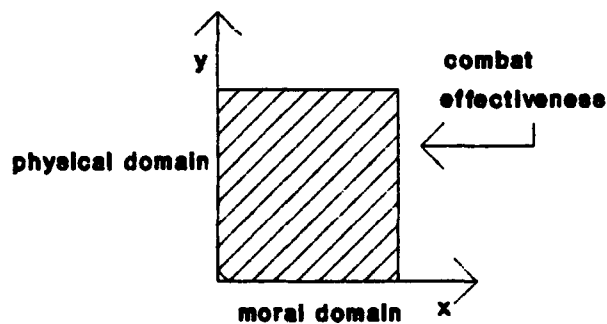


Figure 4

### HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Pitfalls for future operations planners and doctrine writers can often be found in the lessons from the past. In an attempt to discover potential shortfalls in

current reconstitution doctrine, past efforts at reconstituting the moral domain will be examined. The World War II experiences of the 112th Infantry Regiment of the 28th Infantry Division in the battle of Schmidt will be analyzed to develop a perspective for reconstitution in a high intensity, conventional conflict. Next, the policies used during the Korean War to replace personnel and reconstitute combat units will be examined. The fate of the 3rd Battalion of the 29th Infantry Regiment will be highlighted to show the consequences of these policies. Finally, the mechanisms in place during the Vietnam war will be reviewed to gain a perspective for reconstitution in low intensity, guerilla warfare.

The 112th Infantry regiment's experiences during the battle of Schmidt, fought in World War II, hold many lessons for future Army reconstitution planners. Fought through the Huertgen forest from 2-16 November 1944, Schmidt is a horrific example of high intensity conflict fought during a short span of time. This historical analysis keys on the ability, or lack thereof, to reconstitute the moral element of combat power within this regiment. The experiences of the 112th Infantry Regiment are analyzed in detail to illustrate the paradigm of the "Well of Courage" as it pertains to units in combat.

The 28th Division was referred to as the "*Blutiger Eimer*" "Bloody Bucket" division by the opposing Germans.

This not only was descriptive of the 28th's patch but was also "a recognition of the courage and intensity with which men of the 28th fought" while crossing France, Belgium and Luxembourg.<sup>21</sup> Following two months of this continual fighting, the division was pulled out of the line for a period of rest and refitting (moral and physical reconstitution).<sup>22</sup>

Given the arrival of available equipment and supplies the unit's combat effectiveness is reflected by Figure 5. During nearly a month of rest along a quiet sector of the front the soldiers were able to go on leave and, more importantly, new personnel (arriving as individual replacements) were assimilated into the unit. An integral portion of this time was spent in training new personnel and exposing them to very light combat conditions.<sup>23</sup> Assimilation through casual friendships

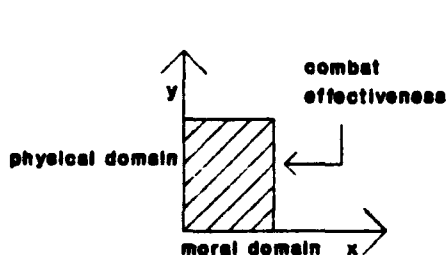


Figure 5

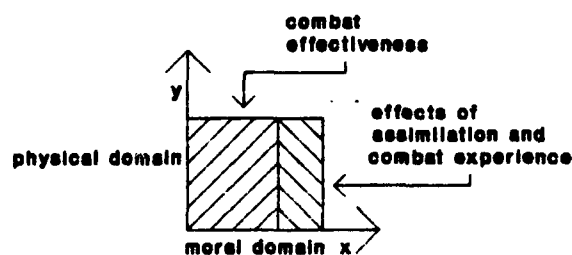


Figure 6

and combat training, mixed with limited combat experience, would over time increase the value of the "x" factor in the model. (See Figure 6)

While individual soldier skills improved, there was a serious deficiency in officer and non-commissioned officer training. Filler leaders had been drawn from various non-infantry units and lacked the requisite skills required of an infantry officer or NCO.<sup>24</sup> Led by officers not totally competent, the confidence of the individual soldier was still lacking, thus limiting the maximum effect from the moral domain on combat effectiveness. Likening the moral status of the regiment to the "Well of Courage", the level of will (water) within the "Well" was perhaps 80-85% full. The limiting factor to a full "Well" was the soldier's lack of confidence in new leaders.

The 112th Infantry Regiment initiated the main effort on 2 November. The first two days saw remarkable success with the 3rd battalion seizing the divisional objective of Schmidt, the 1st battalion advancing on Kommerscheidt and the 2d battalion consolidating gains made on the Vossenack ridge.<sup>25</sup> This initial success was truly the proverbial "calm before the storm." Decay of will - the emptying of the "Well of Courage" - was already beginning among the soldiers of the 2/112th on the Vossenack ridge. German artillery was "constant and relentless." Effective communication was severed among platoons and squads and individual soldiers had already begun "huddling hopelessly in their foxholes."<sup>26</sup> With communications cut from supporting squads and platoons,

the replenishment of will from comrades and leaders was restricted, or in some cases severed all together. The strain of combat was emptying the "Well", but new will (water) was not flowing in to recharge it.

The next four days brought terror and disintegration to the Regiment. Along the Vossenack ridge German artillery began concentrating fires on individual positions, causing tremendous fear among the soldiers of the 2/112th.<sup>27</sup> Replenishment of will had already been restricted by the lack of communication with other squads and platoons. Individual confidence and trust was now being shut off, as individuals felt they were being personally targeted. The soldiers' reserve of individual will was depleting rapidly. The pressure being exerted from outside the "Well" through fear and discouragement was beginning to exceed the countering force from within the "Well" of individual and collective will. On 4 November the 3/112th was driven from Schmidt. Overwhelmed by German tanks, the 3/112th, which had been properly executing withdrawal orders in small groups, suddenly became a disheartened, demoralized and undisciplined mob fleeing for expected safety in the rear.<sup>28</sup> 4 November ended with the 112th in disarray. The bricks of the "Well" (unit cohesion) were coming apart as the bond of the mortar (discipline) that held the unit together dissolved.

The 5th of November brought increased trauma to the

2/112th on the Vossenack Ridge. German artillery persisted with such intensity that most of the soldiers' nerves were completely shattered. The Echo Company commander summed up his thoughts: "they [his men] all should be evacuated. Many were in such a shocked, dazed condition that the platoon leaders had to order them to eat."<sup>29</sup> Soldiers who were given orders to man individual fighting positions, openly disobeyed and shrank back into houses. Company commanders attempted to remedy this problem by reporting to battalion that they needed relief. While the "Well of Courage" had not yet collapsed, the pressure being applied to it from outside destructive forces necessitated immediate attention. Unfortunately, the combat condition of the 2/112th was reported by regimental headquarters as "excellent" at the end of the day.<sup>30</sup>

The situation in the 1st Battalion and 3rd Battalion sectors in Kommerscheidt was not any better. The 3rd Battalion Commander, Lieutenant Colonel Flood was evacuated for combat exhaustion and Major Hazlett, 1st Battalion Commander, was placed in command of both battalions.

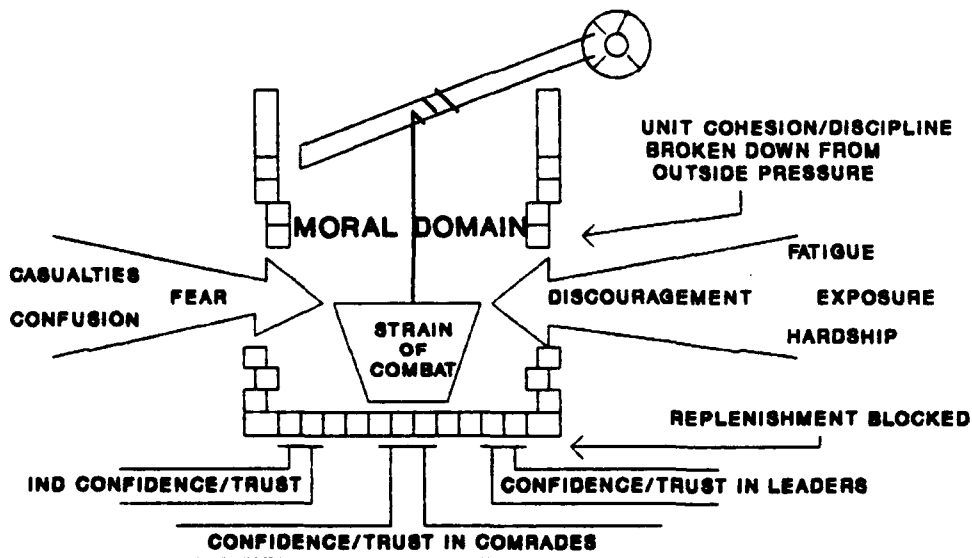
The next day saw the continued dissolution of the 112th. The combined element of the 1/112th and 3/112th continued to be subjected to effective enemy fires in Kommerscheidt with no thought of regaining the initiative. On the Vossenack Ridge the 2/112th was

performing even worse. The day can be summed up as one of fear, panic, and full unorganized retreat. The Echo Company Executive Officer, Lieutenant Condon, expressed the situation as follows, "the men had simply reached the limits of endurance."<sup>31</sup> The following G-3 Periodic Report, when compared to the ground truth, is a damning indication of how bad the command, control and communications (c<sup>3</sup>) were within the 28th Infantry Division: "2d Battalion received very heavy and concentrated artillery fire, withdrew to reorganize and then regained their original position."<sup>32</sup> In reality the unit was destroyed as a fighting organization, losing all ground and being reduced to merely 40 effective soldiers. By this point in the battle, the "Well of Courage" for soldiers within the 112th Infantry Regiment had disintegrated. The 112th Infantry Regiment was completely drained by the stress of combat, with little or no moral replenishment. The fear and discouragement that is natural in combat had completely broken down the military discipline holding the regiment together.

The 7th of November marked the completion of the disintegration of the 112th as depicted in Figure 7. Continued German infiltration and morally drained American soldiers caused the wholesale rout of the combined 1st and 3rd battalions of the 112th. Several attempts during the day to stem the rout of the battalions met with little or no results. Soldiers were so



## 'WELL OF COURAGE'



**DISINTEGRATION OF THE 112TH INF**  
**FIGURE 7**

badly shaken, "they hesitated for only a few minutes before continuing on toward the rear."<sup>33</sup> Late that night the order was passed to reconstitute the 112th Infantry Regiment. The strength of the three battalions following the fight was 366 (42%) in the 1st battalion, 40 (5%) in the 2d battalion and 285 (33%) in the 3d battalion.<sup>34</sup> (The authorized strength of an infantry battalion was 871 soldiers.)

Once pulled from the line, the 112th Infantry Regiment was again reconstituted, prior to the battle of the Bulge. Some have said that this reconstitution effort following Schmidt is a model for future reconstitution missions.<sup>35</sup> Given the loss of American lives sustained during the disintegration of this regiment, coupled with the lack of adequate pro-active measures to

minimize this moral disintegration, that conclusion is premature.

During the Second World War there were large pools of replacements to draw from, time available for training of individual replacements, a nationally accepted standard of longterm commitment, and enough combat units to rotate units in and out of the line. The Korean War saw changes in these characteristics that had great effects on reconstitution.

Initially replacements in Korea could not keep pace with casualties.<sup>36</sup> Training time was severely shortened to speed up the replacement process. New inductee training was cut from 14 weeks to a mere 6 weeks prior to their deployment.<sup>37</sup> The acceptance of a long-term commitment was missing. The United States Army reached the decision that for the benefit of "troop morale" there needed to be a rotation system. Individual soldiers would not be expected to stay in Korea to the termination of hostilities as had been the case in World War II. The initial policy was that after six months in combat or 12 months in the theater (rear), the soldier would be rotated from Korea.<sup>38</sup> However, due to the lack of replacements mentioned above, this policy was not effective. Given the above problems, General Douglas MacArthur did not have sufficient troops to rotate units in and out of the line to provide that time required to replenish individual will and courage.<sup>39</sup>

Major General William A. Beiderlinden, G-1 of the Far East Command, reported that all possible short-cuts were executed to keep combat units in the field and forego retraining. Soldiers who had received combat wounds were continually returned to the front prior to full medical recovery. Units with combat capable soldiers were combined, thus joining men together who didn't know each other. These measures resulted in the "inability to develop full combat effectiveness."<sup>40</sup>

To solve this manpower shortfall the Army's primary replacement policy was to continue to pursue the individual replacement system used during World War II. However, new problems related to a policy of individual replacement surfaced during the Korean war. Given the shortage of replacements from the reservists and draftee pools, active duty units in the continental United States had their personnel, especially non-commissioned officers, stripped out and sent to Korea as fillers. The results are typified by the 1st Cavalry Division which was seriously short on NCO strength when it deployed to the Korean theater. 1st Cavalry had sent nearly 750 NCOs to the 24th and 25th Infantry Divisions. This left the Division seriously short of NCO's.<sup>41</sup>

In addition to filling out committed units with NCOs from non-deployed units, many other infantry unit replacements came from supply troops, clerks and typists. These non-infantry soldiers were at times sent to

the front even before they had an opportunity to zero (sight-in) their weapons.<sup>42</sup> More tragic was the "recruitment" of Koreans to fill United States shortages. Young Koreans were policed up off the streets of Pusan and Taegu with no warning. Many of these young men were still carrying their school materials when they reported to their initial camps. In a state of shock and depression, they acquired their combat schooling at the front.<sup>43</sup>

The alternative to individual replacement was a system of unit rotations. National Guard and Reserve units could replace those units involved in the fighting. Pride and morale would be much higher if these units could stay together and fight together. A serious drawback to this plan was the requirement to train the units to combat standards prior to deployment to Korea. This was very time and manpower intensive.<sup>44</sup> There were however, two occasions in Korea when National Guard units rotated with active duty divisions. The 45th and 40th Infantry Divisions rotated with the 1st Cavalry Division and the 24th Infantry Division. The Eighth Army G-3 rated these two Guard divisions' performance "to be equal in combat effectiveness to the divisions they had replaced."<sup>45</sup>

Unit rotations appealed to Army planners and state National Guard units. However, an Army Korean historian kept reality clearly in focus when she stated that,

despite having great appeal, a system relying on unit rotations would simply not work because, "...the Army could not afford it."<sup>46</sup>

The lack of adequate replacements negated the ability of the Army to execute reconstitution, especially in the moral domain. Thus, as Major General Beiderlinden implied, soldiers were pushed beyond natural limits.

Another result of not being able to reconstitute the combat effectiveness of units - coupled with the given shortage of units to begin with - was the employment of units into combat who had not been "filled" initially in their personal and collective "Wells of Courage". The fate of the 3rd Battalion of the 29th Infantry Regiment highlights this potential tragedy. Garrisoned in Okinawa, it was operating at one-half of its authorized strength of 1200 men. Alerted in mid-July 1950 for movement to Japan, it was promised six weeks of unit training prior to deployment to Korea. To fill out the Regiment, 400 untrained recruits were sent to Okinawa on 20 July. They were issued weapons and field gear and re-boarded the same transport ship -- along with the half-strength 3/29th Infantry -- bound for Korea on that same day. This unit was going to war, not to training in Japan.<sup>47</sup>

Arriving in Pusan on 24 July, the 3/29th was immediately sent into the heart of the combat zone. Sent to

the front immediately, the individual and crew served weapons had not even been test fired. In fact, the .50 caliber machine guns were still coated with Cosmoline grease.<sup>48</sup> A few hours after reaching the front lines on 26 July the unit was ambushed by North Koreans. Unable to react properly, the soldiers tried to run to safety, but as one survivor stated, "They hunted us down like they were shooting rabbits fleeing a brush fire." 757 American men went into battle unprepared; 313 bodies were later found and over 100 prisoners were reported. Due to the decisions of senior officers, inexperienced American soldiers were thrown into battle without proper training, without properly adjusted weapons, and "without the slightest cohesion as a military unit."<sup>49</sup> (Emphasis added)

The decade following the Korean War saw the United States Army committed to a war in Southeast Asia - Vietnam. With ground forces committed to battle in large numbers from 1965 - 1973, it was our nation's longest period of protracted involvement in any war. Vietnam presented a new set of constraints on reconstitution policy. With few large and sustained battles (except the 1968 Tet Offensive), the necessity to replace entire divisions or even brigades was not felt. Reconstitution efforts within smaller units varied depending in large measure on the factors of METT-T (mission, enemy, terrain, available troops and available

time).<sup>50</sup> There was a large pool of individual replacements available through the selective service draft system. Training time was available in the continental United States (CONUS) training base. However, public support for the war dropped much lower than previous conflicts. With these considerations the most critical decision affecting reconstitution in the moral domain of units was the decision to limit tour length.

By utilizing a 12 month individual soldier rotation policy and rotating company commanders every 6 months, the Army ensured that there would be constant personnel turmoil within units. The rationale for this decision seemed to echo the Korean War. General Westmoreland stated: "it was 'politically impossible' to do anything else and that it was good for morale."<sup>51</sup> While this troop rotation improved individual morale, it was detrimental to unit cohesion as units were in constant turmoil sending home experienced soldiers for new draftees on a routine basis.<sup>52</sup> The Army should have heeded the sage advice of an earlier 'Great Captain', Napoleon Bonaparte, when he advised that soldiers must "eat soup together" for an extended period before being sent into combat.<sup>53</sup>

General Bruce Palmer, Jr., a corps commander and Army deputy in Vietnam (followed by assignment as the Army's Vice Chief of Staff from 1968 to 1972), commented on the readiness and combat effectiveness of units and

individuals that went to Vietnam. Newly arriving units would be in a high state of readiness, possessing more than adequate combat effectiveness. Likewise, individual replacements arrived well trained. The problem occurred as unit cohesion and teamwork were stressed because of the constant personnel turnover rate. Because of this turnover rate, a rifle company would practically change 100% every 9 to 10 months.<sup>54</sup>

Given this constant turmoil among units, especially with company grade leadership, discipline and morale within the Army plummeted. Lieutenant General W.J. McCaffrey, commanding general, U.S. Army Vietnam, felt that discipline within the Army in Vietnam had disintegrated to a serious level by 1969. This lack of discipline led to poor combat performance.<sup>55</sup> Drug abuse soared, and later in our involvement, troops began refusing to go into combat.<sup>56</sup> Discipline, the critical bonding ingredient for unit cohesion, had dissolved in many units. This lack of discipline resulted in, as Colonel Harry Summers, Jr. said: "the degeneration of what in 1966-67 was the most disciplined, the most professional, the most combat effective Army the United States had ever fielded, into the drug-ridden undisciplined rabble of the early 1970's."<sup>57</sup>

Some have said that America's involvement in Vietnam was a unique experience and reconstitution doctrine does not apply to that conflict.<sup>58</sup> While there



was very little need to execute the physical requirements of reconstitution, the need for moral reconstitution remained valid. For individuals at company and platoon level, the horrors of war were still present in that low intensity, counter insurgency conflict.

The three historical examples take war from high intensity, conventional conflicts to low intensity, counter insurgency conflict. The reconstitution of the 112th Infantry Regiment prior to the battle of Schmidt was an example of positive attempts to improve a unit. However, the reconstitution effort following the battle is more appropriately termed the "re-creation" of a regiment given the devastating loss of human life within that organization. The implications from the experience of the 112th Infantry Regiment in the battle of Schmidt have relevancy to current reconstitution doctrine.

The positive actions taken prior to the battle improved the physical domain of the regiment and began improving the moral domain. The moral domain, however, was not allotted sufficient time for full replenishment. Given the horrific conditions the unit was called upon to fight in, individual and collective will that was present rapidly diminished. Unit leaders recognized this deficiency within the moral domain, felt its effect on the relative combat effectiveness of their soldiers and sought help, but nothing significant came. The lack of replenishment within the moral domain provided fuel

to the disintegration of the regiment. Thousands of American soldiers died and an American regiment was destroyed.

The Korean War saw no major improvement in our ability to reconstitute in the moral domain. The actions taken in that conflict have great implications to the present force, given the similarities with the Army shrinking both in personnel and in the budget allocation. With those constraints in Korea, the soldier's moral domain was constantly subjugated by the immediate needs of the Army.

During the Vietnam war the 12 month tour length and 6 month command length proved to be a very ineffective mechanism for maintaining the moral domain of the American soldier. The moral reconstitution problems faced in Vietnam and the Army's response to them are very relevant today. With the potential for involvement in other low intensity conflicts, especially in the Southern Hemisphere, it is important to learn from past mistakes. The Army's policy of 12-month combat tour lengths during Vietnam appears to have been the pinnacle of attempting to equally share the hardships of war. In so doing, the Army "sacrificed the consistency and stability that are the hallmarks of unit tradition, esprit, and cohesion."<sup>59</sup> What developed was a lack of unit and individual commitment, lack of trust and respect for leaders, and little concern for comrades.

Throughout these conflicts, the lifeblood of the reconstitution policy was individual replacement. While some unit replacement did take place, the Army generally lacked the quantity of units needed to rely on a unit replacement policy, especially during Korea and Vietnam. An Army historian who did extensive study on the history of reconstitution efforts found it difficult to imagine how supplying large quantities of individuals into combat units could ever produce consistent, quality organizations.<sup>60</sup> The experiences and lessons learned from past reconstitution efforts in the moral domain provide excellent tools for analyzing the correctness and utility of current Army doctrine within this area.

#### CURRENT DOCTRINE

Current Army reconstitution doctrine is best analyzed from three different perspectives: the Army as a whole, the maneuver element and the combat service support (CSS) element. FM100-5, Operations, May 86, TRADOC Pamphlet 525-5, Airland Operations, 1 August 91 and TRADOC Pamphlet 525-51, U.S. Army Operational Concept for Reconstitution on the Airland Battlefield, 4 April 86 will be utilized to capture the Army perspective. FM71-100, Division Operations, June 90 and FM71-3, Armored and Mechanized Infantry Brigade, 11 May 88 will be used to determine the maneuver perspective. FM100-10, Combat Service Support, 18 February 88, FM63-

3, Combat Service Support Operations - Corps, 24 August 83 and FM63-2, Division Support Command, Armored, Infantry and Mechanized Infantry Divisions, 20 May 91 will be the basis for the CSS perspective.

All of the above manuals, with the exceptions of FM63-3 and FM63-2, are in agreement that reconstitution consists of reorganization and regeneration. (FM63-3 only addresses regeneration and FM63-2 does not address reconstitution ) Reorganization is a shifting of internal assets to consolidate a larger (less effective) unit into a smaller (more effective) unit, i.e., a depleted company reorganized into a viable platoon. Regeneration, on the other hand, is the infusion of outside assets to restore an organization to combat effectiveness, i.e., rebuilding a depleted company with outside equipment and personnel to restore a viable combat effective company. The sub-elements of reconstitution differ however from manual to manual. Listed below is a breakout of the different sub-elements recognized by each manual.\*

	100-5	525-5	525-51	71-3	100-10	63-3
PERSONNEL	X	X	X	X	X	X
EQUIPMENT	X	X	X	X	X	X
SUPPLIES	X				X	X
C <sup>2</sup>	X		X	X	X	
METL TRAINING	X	X**	X	X	X	
SUSTAINMENT		X				
UNIT COHESION	X		X	X	X	
DISCIPLINE					X	

\* FM71-100 and FM63-2 do not break out elements.

\*\* States some training may be required, not METL training.

All of the above manuals consider reconstitution as a command/operations decision. The commander, with the advice of the G3/S3, must determine when a unit needs to undergo reconstitution and what type of reconstitution is required/possible. Importantly, all view reconstitution as an action required after a unit has become combat ineffective.

While the purpose of the monograph focuses on reconstituting the moral domain, it remains important to recognize a lack of agreement by major elements of the Army on exactly what reconstitution in general means and what it involves. The two capstone manuals referenced, FM100-5 and FM100-10, are similar in their concept of reconstitution. Lack of specificity however seems to be the linkage between FM100-5 and FM100-10. FM100-5 addresses reconstitution in very broad terms and never clearly defines at what level reconstitution begins. FM100-10, on the other hand, never states a specific definition of the term, although it does address all the sub-elements. FM100-10 also implies regeneration takes place at corps level and higher. This seems a reasonable assumption given the tremendous assets required (major end items and personnel replacements) in regeneration. However, manuals that branch out of these two capstone manuals are much less harmonious.

The two manuals within the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) area of responsibility, TRADOC

Pamphlets 525-5 and 525-51, differ significantly. The reconstitution specific text, TRADOC Pam 525-51, defines reconstitution as "extraordinary actions".<sup>61</sup> TRADOC Pam 525-5, on the other hand, takes a less dramatic approach and views reconstitution as a process involving normal activities that may escalate to beyond routine functions. The decision to pursue non-routine reconstitution, that being regeneration, is an operational level decision. The lack of linkage between these two manuals from the same headquarters indicates confusion on what reconstitution really means.

Within the maneuver element the confusion continues. FM71-100, the division manual, only addresses reconstitution in very sketchy details. Within its brief discussion on the subject it states that: "the division reconstitution effort focuses on the reorganization of organic assets to quickly return to combat."<sup>62</sup> There is no mention of regeneration and the emphasis is on speed to get back into the fight. On the other hand, the brigade manual, FM71-3, goes into great detail on reconstitution. While it never specifically defines the term, it addresses sub-elements of reconstitution in some detail. FM71-3 states that brigades reorganize battalions and regenerate companies. That seems a very ambitious objective given the very limited assets available in a brigade. The tone of the brigade manual is not so much on speed to return to the fight, as quality

refitting of the maneuver element. This manual recognizes some of those actions that must be considered in the moral domain. As within the manuals representing the Army's perspective, the maneuver element manuals seem divergent in their explanation of reconstitution.

Examining the combat service support manuals reveal just as much confusion. FM63-2, the divisional CSS manual, does not even address reconstitution - be it reorganization or regeneration. FM63-3, the corps level manual, only addresses the aspect of regeneration, not reorganization. This manual implies that the smallest element to be regenerated would be a brigade. This is consistent with FM100-10. It seems appropriate, however, to expect to find some mention of the CSS responsibilities to support reorganization efforts within brigades and divisions.

The analysis above shows that current reconstitution doctrine is not consistent across the Army. Given this evidence, it is important to examine if procedures exist in doctrine to adequately address reconstitution in the moral domain. FM100-5 states that a unit should ideally be provided time to come together and "begin reestablishing internal cohesion".<sup>63</sup> It also states that when a unit is being regenerated following catastrophic losses, command and control (C<sup>2</sup>) needs to be reestablished and METL training should be conducted. With the exception of TRADOC Pam 525-5, this is consis-

tent with at least one document from each element (maneuver and CSS) looked at above. The problem surfaces, however, in the fact that within each element there are inconsistencies again. For example the brigade manual, FM71-3, addresses command and control (C<sup>2</sup>), METL training and unit cohesion as needing to be regenerated, but the division manual, FM71-100, does not address the problem. Similar problems exist with CSS manuals. The capstone CSS manual, FM 100-10, alludes to the necessity to address the moral domain during reconstitution. However, the corps CSS manual FM 63-3 only addresses reconstitution in the physical domain. The division manual, FM 63-2 does not address any of the domains within reconstitution.

### SYNTHESIS, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Reconstitution doctrine remains insufficient and ambiguous in the field. Elements within the Army have recognized these shortcomings. The Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) in 1989 found, "There are currently no FMs in the field that adequately address reconstitution planning requirements."<sup>64</sup> This remains true. Quoting from the same document, "where [reconstitution] plans are addressed, the guidance is usually very general, stating only that reconstitution will occur."<sup>65</sup> This ambiguity leads to confusion in the field and poor implementation of reconstitution efforts.



Despite doctrine addressing some of the issues regarding reconstituting the moral domain, there remain significant problems within Army doctrine. Except for TRADOC Pam 525-5, which shows reconstitution as a continual process throughout a conflict, all other documents view those actions required for the moral domain occurring after catastrophic incidents, not before. At the lower end of the continuum of conflict, similar to our experience in Vietnam, it is very possible that units will never suffer catastrophic losses which would require reconstitution. Individual soldiers and smaller units (squads and platoons) however, may very well suffer within the moral domain. If not properly addressed in doctrine and planning this shortfall could spread like a cancer throughout the Army, similar to the Vietnam era. As one progresses toward the high intensity conflict end of the continuum, the need exists to reconstitute the moral domain of individuals and units prior to becoming combat ineffective, not after. Current reconstitution doctrine does not address how the individual soldier's "Well of Courage" is to be replenished, thus sustaining a unit's combat power.

General Carl F. Vuono summed up the importance of force sustainment when he stated, "there is nothing clearer in the study of war than the need for adequate force sustainment." He went on to explain that the challenge is not only one of sustaining the CSS (combat

service support) assets of a unit but one of sustaining "combat power".<sup>66</sup> As this monograph has displayed through theoretical discussion and historical analysis, a vital element of combat power sustainment within units is the replenishment and reconstitution of the moral domain of soldiers. As the force structure within the Army continues to diminish - reminiscent of our pre-Korean war posture - the element of the moral domain will gain in significance. Given this level of importance, it is paramount that confusion and misunderstanding regarding reconstitution in the moral domain be eliminated through standardizing doctrine and stressing its importance during leader training.

Confusion and lack of understanding concerning accepted doctrine creates plans that are sparse and lend themselves to the need for improvisation when being executed. While improvisation is a stated logistical imperative, it does not suit quality reconstitution efforts, especially in the moral domain. As Ardant du Picq stated: "unity and confidence cannot be improvised."<sup>67</sup> Reconstitution in the moral domain must be well thought out, requires precious time and entails tremendous leadership from the entire chain of command.

The implications of not having a well defined doctrinal concept of reconstitution for the moral domain are potentially devastating. If "the sole measurement of successful sustainment has always been the generation

of combat power at the decisive time and place,"<sup>68</sup> a lack of congruent doctrine jeopardizes this purpose. Commanders and doctrine writers must recognize that unit cohesion is changable. It requires constant monitoring and attention.<sup>69</sup> As this recognition develops, a better understanding of what constitutes the moral domain of combat, and the need for its replenishment, will evolve. However, as long as individual soldiers continue to be treated as spare parts in a large, impersonal machine, then the essence of the moral domain, and its significance to the sustainment or regeneration of combat power, will remain hidden from the Army.<sup>70</sup> This could possibly lead to unnecessary suffering and death of American soldiers, as well as defeat on the future battlefield.

The objective for reconstitution doctrine within the moral domain parallels a similar objective addressed in the Army's training manual, FM25-100, Training the Force. The Army's goal in unit training is to avoid periods of peak training followed by prolonged periods where training receives a lesser priority, such as intense train-up times prior to NTC visits, ARTEPs, etc. The FM refers to this as training in peaks and valleys. Instead the goal is to sustain the level of training of a unit within a higher band referred to as "the band of excellence". Training becomes much less event oriented and instead looks into the future. Training is contin-

uous and personnel and leader turn-overs are spaced out evenly over time. This method of training produces units constantly prepared to perform their wartime missions.<sup>71</sup>

Reconstitution in the moral domain should be similar. Historically reconstitution has followed the peaks and valleys approach mentioned above. Units were reconstituted prior to a major commitment - the 28th Infantry Division prior to Schmidt - then the next major reconstitution effort was usually only after devastating losses. Unfortunately, current doctrine still speaks of reconstitution as actions after losses.

The challenge for future leaders is to minimize combat losses from all causes, including disintegration of the moral domain, thus relieving some of the burden involved in reconstitution. By recognizing the effects of the moral domain on the disintegration of a unit and taking positive measures prior to disintegration, conservation of the fighting force will be facilitated. If the mission requires great personal sacrifice, then combat leaders must recognize that there is a significant time requirement to "put the unit back together" and recharge the "Well of Courage."

While a system employing unit replacements or even squad and team replacements would be more appropriate in reconstituting the moral domain, given the time and personnel requirements this system would demand, it

seems that individual replacements are the prime replenishment method of the future. Accepting this assumption, it becomes important that combat leaders recognize the paradigm of the "Well of Courage" and place sufficient attention on the replenishment of the moral domain (the individual and collective will of the soldiers) before a unit disintegrates.

The Army must reach agreement on what constitutes reconstitution in the moral domain to ensure unity of effort by all military elements that effect this mission. It must determine how to apply reconstitution in the moral domain to all contingencies across the continuum of conflict. The Army, likewise, must accept the reality of the extensive time requirements inherent in this mission. Once agreements are reached, applications are determined and time requirements are accepted for reconstitution, they need to be reflected in the published doctrine of the United States Army.

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